Name: HW114b\_Motivation

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Geometry, Period

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**Geometry**

**Homework**



# Read & respond to the following article:

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# Student Motivation

## Explore common reasons for lack of or for increasing studentmotivation

 Which students are most likely to drop out of high school? Those failing? Those struggling with a particular subject area? Those who lack the proper preparation from grade school?

Surprisingly, none of the above, according to a study funded by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and conducted by a firm that spearheads policies designed to strengthen communities. In its study “The Silent Epidemic,” Civic Enterprises found that most students who drop out of high school are not “bad” or failing students. In fact, many who drop out have average or better grades.

Lack of motivation was the number one reason for dropping out of school, states Civic Enterprises. The organization interviewed high school dropouts aged 16 to 26 from 25 different U.S. cities, and found that 6 out of 10 students had C averages or better. Furthermore, 7 out of 10 believed they would have graduated if they had tried hard enough.

Motivating students is a challenge all members of the education community face. According to education professionals and experts on the subject, motivation is defined by a student's desire to participate in the learning process, supported by personal and external factors.

#### Two types of motivation

Student motivation primarily is separated into two categories: extrinsic motivators and intrinsic motivators. These motivators are driven by friends, parents, teachers, and personal convictions. They influence students to earn good grades, complete assignments, and participate in class discussions.

##### **Extrinsic motivation**

Many students hate what they consider busywork, or assignments they perceive as pointless. But what if, at the end of an assignment, an amazing prize was offered for students who finished the assignment correctly? Wouldn't that spur students to submit assignments quickly and accurately?

Extrinsic motivation includes outside motivational forces that push students to work hard. This means accomplishing tasks because there are rewards associated with it. For students, extrinsic motivators come in the form of grades, parental, teacher, and social expectations.

But receiving a reward doesn't guarantee motivation among students. In order for extrinsic motivators to be effective, the student must desire the rewards, and understand that academic achievement is the only way of obtaining those rewards.

Despite the appeal of outside rewards, however, extrinsic motivators are not as effective as motivators that result from self-determination. According to the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching, extrinsic rewards or punishments actually distract the student from the learning process, and do not work in the long-term. And, students learning material for a reward typically do not continue to learn the material once the teacher removes the reward.

##### **Intrinsic Motivation**

Intrinsic motivation comes from within, and is the most effective form of motivation for learners. Regardless of extrinsic rewards, a student's personal interest in the material is what drives them to be good students.

Students motivated intrinsically allow curiosity to guide them, enjoy the challenge of learning, and push themselves to master a topic. But often, students must be led by teachers to realize their potential for intrinsic motivators to be effective.

Teachers are instrumental in reinforcing intrinsic motivators for students by showing that hard work and determination has a big pay off past high school. If students find subjects they enjoy and apply themselves for the sake of learning, they are likely to approach future careers with the same attitude, finding the right career for their interests and passions.

#### Why are students unmotivated?

The reasons why students are disengaged from school are nuanced and varied. Outside factors such as relationship issues, problems within families, and social life concerns shift the focus from schoolwork and education, distracting students from the education process. But perhaps one of the main reasons students are unmotivated is boredom.

The High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE) is a comprehensive survey by the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy administered to high school students across the country. It measures engagement in the classroom, and identifies why or why not students find school stimulating.

HSSSE Project Director Ethan Yazzie-Mintz states in the survey’s results that 66% of students surveyed in 2009 indicated being bored in class at least every day. In fact, only 2% of students reported never being bored. Boredom in class stemmed from students not finding the materials interesting or relevant, finding work unchallenging, and listening to uninteresting lectures. The survey responses show, as a whole, most students do not feel their opinions and views are respected or acknowledged, leading to widespread apathy about learning.

Students who don't feel respected or acknowledged are likely to feel distanced from the education community, caring less about performing well in school. Establishing a relationship between the student and teacher is integral to the educational experience, and can make the difference between a student who is intrinsically motivated, and one who is extrinsically motivated.

**Reflection Questions: Please respond on loose-leaf in complete, thoughtful sentences.**

1. Define extrinsic & intrinsic motivation in your own words. What are disadvantages of extrinsic motivation?
2. What are examples of extrinsic and intrinsic motivations in your own life?
3. Some examples of intrinsic motivators are seeing personal success or improvement, finding humor in class, seeing how learning applies to career options, being able to make choices with learning, working interactively, finding a subject interesting, getting personal feedback, seeing real-life application of materials, feeling challenged in class, etc. What forms of intrinsic motivations are **most** powerful for you when it comes to school?
4. How motivated do you feel to perform well in math? Why do you think this is?
5. Boredom is one of the biggest motivation-killers. Obviously, teachers have a responsibility in this regard. You can give suggestions to your teachers about what you find interesting or boring, but they may not take them! So how can you personally use intrinsic motivation when you feel bored with class materials?
6. Do you feel respected and acknowledged in our class? Explain what has caused you to feel this way.
7. How can you develop intrinsic motivation in math class?
8. How do you feel about your math interim scores? How can you apply intrinsic motivation to your response to your scores to motivate yourself in math (& elsewhere) for your last quarter of your sophomore year?
9. Choose one of these concepts & explain how you relate this to our class interim data and to being successful in geometry: (A) strengths & weaknesses, (B) malleable intelligence, or (C) personal goals or purpose.
10. How does intrinsic motivation relate to **defining your pride**?